covering the State of Jharkhand have taken precautionary measures in the past to cancel/ divert/reschedule trains that are suspected to be vulnerable from attacks by Left Wing Extremists.

Forceful occupation of seats in trains by political workers

†*325. SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the workers of various political parties freely travel in the trains without tickets to take part in the rallies being organized by the concerned parties;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these workers forcibly occupy the seats and berths of the passengers traveling on valid tickets and the railway administration does not provide any help to the passengers; and

(c) if so, the action being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) to (c) Some cases of workers of political parties traveling without tickets in trains in large numbers to participate in rallies organized by their respective political parties do come to notice. However, all out efforts are made by the ticket checking and security staff to curb entry of such unauthorized passengers in coaches. Regular *bona fide* passengers are provided necessary help in such situations including refund of full fares in cases when they do not want to travel. As a preventive measure, special trains are run to avoid such rally participants overcrowding the regular trains.

Steel plants in Jharkhand

*330. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the details of MoUs signed for setting up of steel plants in the State of Jharkhand during the last two years and how many projects have commenced, so far, project-wise;

(b) whether the present or proposed New National Mineral Policy is not conducive to setting up of steel plants in the States, as mining lease/iron ore blocks are not allotted on time to the manufacturers; and

(c) what steps Government proposes to take to ensure that steel production does not suffer on account of non-availability of iron ore/iron ore blocks?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The details of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by various steel producers with Government of Jharkhand during the last two years and the status of each project is enclosed as Statement (*See* below).

(b) National Mineral Policy 2007 is under consideration of the Government. The allocation of iron ore is governed under Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) read with rule 35 of the Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 providing for end use of minerals. Under this act, the concerned State Government examines and recommends the applications for mining lease under Section 11(3) of the MMDR Act, 1957. Rule 63 A of MC Rules 1960 also provides for a time-frame to dispose of the complete applications for mining lease. In case of delay, the same has to be explained in writing.

(c) An Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) has been constituted to co-ordinate and monitor issues concerning major steel investments in the country which also includes the problems relating to availability of Iron Ore.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.